

OFFER FOR IOWANS

IDENTIFYING INFORMATION

Offer Identifier: H_131_1F

Offer Name: Improving Services to Blind Iowans

This offer is for existing activities.

Result(s) Addressed: Ratio of average client wage to average state wage as a percentage; Competitive employment outcomes as a percentage of all employment outcomes; Percent of objectives to increase independence met as a percent of all objectives set; library readership.

Participants in the Offer: Department for the Blind

Person Submitting Offer: Allen C. Harris

Contact Information: Allen C. Harris 281-1334

OFFER DESCRIPTION

The Iowa Department for the Blind is the state agency responsible for providing the services Iowans who are blind need to live independently and work competitively. The services in this offer include:

Vocational Rehabilitation Services

Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped

Non-visual Access Technology Services

Independent Living Rehabilitation Services

Adult Orientation and Adjustment Center

Business Enterprises Program

Aids and Devices

OFFER JUSTIFICATION

These services are not available to blind Iowans elsewhere. Further, with small populations it is not efficient to operate these services in a community-based setting. The general fund appropriation also leverages federal formula grant allocations that require matching funds at a rate of almost four to one. The concept of informed choice by those we serve is inherent in the administration of the Department's programs. Therefore, this offer is in line with the Health Enterprise Management Team's overarching principle of the preservation of personal dignity and preference and with its goal of improving the quality of life. In fact, everything in this offer contributes to strengthen and support families. This offer also contributes to the provision of safe and healthy living environments of choice for persons with special needs and vulnerable populations. There is considerable expressed opposition among consumers and donors to the use of donated money for the maintenance of the routine costs of state agency operations normally financed by appropriations of tax dollars citizens are required by law to pay. Consumers

and those who donate money to the work of the Department often express their desire for funds they willingly contribute, on the other hand, to be used to meet acute needs of blind persons other grants cannot finance. This offer would substitute an increased general fund appropriation in place of the continued practice of using donated funds for operations.

PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENTS AND TARGETS

Ratio of average VR wage to average state wage as a percentage – 100 %.

Competitive employment outcomes as a percentage of all employment outcomes – 85 %.

Number of Iowans using services – 6,663.

Library circulation – 240,000.

Items produced in alternative media – 1,500.

Number of educational and vocational requests filled by Instructional Materials Center – 2,000.

WHAT WE ARE DOING TO IMPROVE RESULTS

EFORCE-Our new case management system has improved access to important client information by eliminating the need for complex software to be run on local and remote computers; all that is required is the standard browser that comes with the Windows operating system. Because the new system also stores narrative information (e.g., case notes), information about a client is much easier to find; in the past, paper files had to be searched laboriously for specific information. Finally, due to some proactive Web page designs, our case management system is much easier for our blind employees to use; with the press of a single key, it is possible rapidly to jump from one section of the page to another; and all elements of the system are completely accessible using nonvisual access technology.

INFOEYES is a pilot virtual reference and information community for the visually impaired. The purpose of the pilot is to test the OCLC Question Point Enhanced software for providing information services for the visually impaired. The project includes 12 libraries in ten states. The Iowa Library for the Blind and Physically handicapped is happy to be a part of this project. InfoEyes allows users to ask a librarian to help you find information about absolutely anything!

ALL IOWA READS is a new project sponsored by the Iowa Center for the Book. Its goal is to bring people together to read and discuss both the chosen book and the many themes and ideas generated by that discussion. Our library was one of over 100 Iowa organizations participating in this first year's project.

CAREER RESOURCE CENTER will be another tool for use by Field Operations, Orientation and the Library. Vocational rehabilitation clients, orientation

students, and other library users will find career related materials such as resume writing guides, job search strategies, and interviewing techniques in a wide-variety of formats and levels all in one convenient place. In addition, the Center offers Internet access, scanner, CCTV, facsimile, and printer. Internet resources are bookmarked for career related sites. Refreshable Braille display, JAWS, WindowEyes, Duxbury for Windows, Victor ReaderSoft, and the latest Adobe Acrobat are all available. The purpose of the Center is to help students and clients find a career of their choice and help them find successful employment.

PRISON BRAILLE PROGRAM-For years the default method for creating tactile drawings was the collage method. Using string, cut-out paper, sandpaper, even dental floss, participants in Iowa's prison Braille program create maps, diagrams, math figures, and drawings of all sorts to illustrate history, science, math, geography and other textbooks for blind students.

With the aid of a Tactile Image Enhancer and swell paper, Braillists at the Anamosa State Penitentiary are experimenting with a new technique for creating these drawings. Using computer-drawing tools they created images which are then printed onto swell paper. The swell paper is run through the Tactile Image Enhancer and creates a tactile duplicate of the print image. Their first project was a book on the history of architecture, which contained line drawings of everything from the pyramids to modern skyscrapers. The results are precise, clean and very usable. The files can be stored easily on computers and reprinted upon demand. This may prove to be an excellent method for producing drawings for textbooks in the future and reduce the extent to which we rely on out-of-state suppliers of this resource.

WEBBRAILLE- Books transcribed by Iowa's volunteers are now available for download through the WebBraille interface. WebBraille allows registered library patrons to download and read Braille books. You can locate books either through the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (NLS) catalog at www.loc.gov/nls, or directly from the WebBraille site at www.loc.gov/nls/braille. WebBraille books can be read in Braille with a refreshable Braille display, or with synthesized speech using computer software such as Kurzweil or OpenBook. Other Braille-aware devices such as Braille 'n Speak, BrailleNote, BookPort and Book Courier can also read these Braille files aloud. Books, magazines, and Braille music are all available through WebBraille. All NLS Braille books produced since 1990 and all Braille magazines are available as well as a wide variety of Braille music scores. Several regional libraries, including Iowa, are also contributing volunteer-produced books. This will promote literacy, education, and employability of Iowans who rely on our services.

INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS CENTER, which serves approximately 500 students and employed persons, has been gradually phasing out paper records

and outdated processes over the past several years. However, a change of staff is anticipated within the next year due to retirements. We plan to review all processes handled by this area, revise procedures to be more streamlined and to more fully utilize electronic resources, and train new staff in the revised processes. The result will be more efficient service delivery and more time for direct customer service in this area.

TRANSITION AND PATHFINDERS-This effort will match young adults ages 16 to 26 with successful, competent, and positive mentors who are blind or severely visually impaired. Through a series of workshops and other informational materials, these mentors and the young people with whom they are matched will learn about self-advocacy, blindness skills, the development of self-confidence, and career exploration. Young people participating in this program will have the opportunity to spend quality time with a mentor who can help deal with questions and concerns, talk about problems encountered because of vision loss and learn effective techniques for going to school, doing a job, or accomplishing everyday tasks. Mentors will also be able to offer advice on career exploration and self-advocacy. We have developed training packets for each of our five workshops that will be held as our program begins, as well as a toolbox of information regarding the workshops for our mentors and participants to have and use. We are recruiting for this program.

BUSINESS ENTERPRISE PROGRAM-We have entered into a contract with Joe Blackstone Consulting. Some of our traditional business opportunities--federal properties, state locations and other local governmental entities--are no longer profitable. We are working with Mr. Blackstone to find and develop new and varied business locations, including some outside Iowa in the national park system and military facilities. Our interstate rest area vending program continues to be stable but we must supplement this with new and different businesses. We are working to reinvent the Randolph-Sheppard Program to meet current challenges and opportunities.

PROJECT ASSIST ONLINE offers online courses to prepare students for the Microsoft Office Specialist certification exams. We have completed a pilot program with students from Iowa. Students use the Internet to do their course work. During the summer we made improvements to the courses and recruited students.

The Project ASSIST Deaf-Blind staff has been finishing their first series of tutorials. These tutorials, which will be ready for release in the near future, use keyboard commands and screen reading software, in conjunction with a refreshable Braille display, to teach deaf-blind computer users how to use Microsoft Windows XP and other popular Microsoft applications. The tutorials

feature step-by-step, specific instructions tailored to each individual combination of screen reader, Braille display and Microsoft application.

The first set of tutorials focuses on Windows XP in conjunction with JAWS for Windows and five different Braille displays. Future plans include tutorials for a word processor, a Web browser, an e-mail program and a computer-based TTY program, as well as tutorials using Window-Eyes as the screen reader. The project staff has done extensive research on the best techniques and strategies to be taught in these tutorials and are anxious to apply the lessons learned to future sets of tutorials.

The Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) released the results from the Standards and Indicators for the nation's 80 vocational rehabilitation (VR) agencies on April 16, 2004. RSA's single most important indicator measuring agency performance compares the ratio of average hourly wages of successfully employed individuals who have completed their VR program with the average state hourly wage. The Department for the Blind leads the nation in this category! The average hourly wage of individuals successfully employed through the VR program was \$12.02, compared to the state average wage of \$14.05. This created a ratio of 86 %, best in the nation – again. The Department passed all three primary indicators and continues to be the overall national leader in VR performance indicators. The work we have described above will contribute to maintaining this edge.

DISCONTINUED FUNCTIONS AND COST CONTROL

- This offer does not include funds to sustain Project ASSIST Online or some functions specific to the Department's deaf-blind clientele. Both of these projects are described above. Each of these efforts is now supported entirely by federal grants ending July 31, 2005 and November 30, 2006, respectively, and together account for \$ 450,000 annually. We are searching for alternatives that would allow this work to continue without increased general fund appropriations.
- The Department has closed unprofitable cafeteria operations in Des Moines at the federal building and at 524 4th Street. More similar changes are likely.
- We no longer print the biennial report required by 216B.7, Code of Iowa. This report is now posted to the web.
- This offer will also require a reassessment of the future of the Department's offices in Cedar Rapids and Cedar Falls, including the retention and/or possible relocation of affected employees.
- Cost control:
 - ◆ We cancelled a contract with Libera, saving approximately \$ 50,000.

- ◆ The remodeling of the orientation center was deferred because of bids that were much higher than even our architect anticipated. For 2005 we re-bid the project in hopes of doing the work during the winter for the express purpose of getting it done less expensively. Bids were due October 12.
- ◆ We maintained staff vacancies last fiscal year worth approximately \$ 283,000.
- ◆ We apply for, and receive, E-rate discounts on telephone and internet access costs, amounting to a savings of \$ 69,235 last year. We will do this again in 2005 and in 2006.
- ◆ In prior recent years we negotiated a contract with the independent living centers with an annual value of \$ 170,000 for the purpose of increasing referrals and outreach to underserved populations. Last year the contract amounted to a maximum of \$ 55,014 and required the contractor to meet certain specified performance measures. They did not meet all of the measures and we paid only \$ 34,155 because they met some, but not all, of our expectations. It is unlikely this contract will exist at all this year or in 2006.
- ◆ We have recently renegotiated the lease on the Cedar Rapids district office at a savings.
- ◆ We have cancelled the service agreements on the office copy machines.
- ◆ We have cancelled the service agreements on the Juliet Braille printers.
- ◆ Recently, colleges and universities have shown some tendency to renege on their financial aid packages when they learn we are authorizing costs for the students. We recouped \$ 13,000 last year.
- ◆ In April we renegotiated the agreement for space we rent from Two Rivers for storage of machines on 4th Street at a 50 % savings.
- ◆ We are moving documents, forms, and reports to electronic media vs. paper at a savings conservatively estimated at \$ 21,440 so far. This number will improve.
- ◆ We are attempting to consolidate purchases from vendors so that they are large enough to avoid additional shipping costs.
- ◆ We have eliminated the subsidy pertaining to the operation of the cafeteria in the building, which has been converted to vending.
- ◆ We are currently reviewing vendor payment data to determine opportunities for better pricing.
- ◆ We are looking at the potential savings involved in moving long distance traffic from McLeod to the ICN for our district offices.

PRICE AND REVENUE SOURCE

Total Price: \$ 10,447,734

Expense Description	Amount of Expense	FTEs
Personal services	\$ 6,381,379	109.5
Aid to individuals	2,382,259	
Contractual services	755,041	
All other	933,487	
Total	\$ 10,452,166	109.5

Revenue Description	Amount
State general fund appropriation request	\$ 2,002,840
Federal support	7,866,028
Other revenue	583,298
Total	\$ 10,452,166

OFFER FOR IOWANS

IDENTIFYING INFORMATION

Offer Identifier: H_283_02F

Offer Name: Independent Living Services

This offer is for a (pick one):

☐ new activity

☐ improved existing activity (describe the improvements in your narratives below)

☒ status quo existing activity

Result(s) Addressed: Improve the Quality of Life and Health of Iowans with disabilities through:

- Providing Services to Entire State
- Removal of Barriers to employment and self sufficiency for the most at-risk persons
- Community Support through collaboration and partnerships
- Preservation of Personal Dignity and Preference
- Cost Effectiveness of Service

Participants in the Offer: Department of Education, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services

Person Submitting Offer: Stephen A. Wooderson, Administrator (515) 281-6731 stephen.wooderson@iowa.gov

Contact Information: Matthew Coulter, Chief Financial Officer, (515) 281-4093 matthew.coulter@iowa.gov

OFFER DESCRIPTION

Independent living (IL) services for persons with disabilities are provided in the home to reduce or eliminate the need for out-of-home residential placement. The IL program primarily addresses architectural and environmental barriers to independence and can usually fit under the umbrella terms of rehabilitation technology and assistive technology. Examples of services include home modifications, vehicle modifications, and assistive technology engineering, services and devices.

Last year assistance was provided for ramping, bathroom modifications, vehicle modifications, some durable medical equipment not covered by insurance, hearing aids, environmental controls, and augmentative communication devices.

Other services include accessing community based resources, self advocacy skills, money management and personal organization skills, and subgrants to private non-profit and other agencies for the establishment or maintenance of community based programs to serve persons with disabilities.

OFFER JUSTIFICATION

- a) 130 clients receiving these services are able to maintain independence by living in their own home in 2003. Persons with disabilities that are able to live independently reduce the costs of personal care and in many instances delay or prevent the need for residential or institutional care. This has a huge impact on quality of life.
- b) **HIGH RETURN ON INVESTMENT:** Each \$1.00 of state appropriations invested in independent living services earns \$9.00 of federal independent living funds.
- c) DVRS provides IL services to persons with significant (SD) or most significant disabilities (MSD). These persons are the most vulnerable and at risk for requiring institutional public assistance. For 2003 DVRS served 695 persons.
- d) DVRS supports the network of seven independent living centers (CILs) to impact the life of all individuals with disabilities living within those seven communities.
- e) Promotes cultural competence by including persons with disabilities within the mainstream of their community and by supporting the person with a disability to participate in the community.

PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT AND TARGET

The performance measure is the number of persons with disabilities able to continue living independently in their home after receiving services. The base number from 2003 is 130 persons. The target for 2006 is 120 persons with disabilities.

PRICE AND REVENUE SOURCE

Total Price: \$289,272

Expense Description	Amount of Expense	FTEs
Independent Living Services	\$289,272	1.00
Total	\$289,272	1.00

Revenue Description	Amount
State Appropriation I68	\$54,150
Federal Matching Funds	\$235,122
Total	\$289,272

OFFER FOR IOWANS

IDENTIFYING INFORMATION

Offer Identifier: H_379_J7401

Offer Name: Healthy Deaf and Hard of Hearing Iowans

Result(s) Addressed:

- Transform Iowa's Economy
- Improve Student Achievement
- Improve Iowans' Health
- Improve Community Safety, particularly for vulnerable Iowans

Participants in the Offer: Deaf Services, Department of Human Rights

Person Submitting Offer: Kathryn Baumann-Reese

Contact Information: 515-281-7121; kathryn.baumann-reese@iowa.gov

OFFER DESCRIPTION

The Division of Deaf Services, Department of Human Rights, will provide consultation, education, information, and assistance to Iowans who experience a hearing loss, and their families, to become self-sufficient, healthy, productive, and involved citizens of the state. In addition, Deaf Services, Department of Human Rights, will provide assessment, technical assistance, training, and information to individuals, organizations, and agencies to ensure accessibility of products, programs, and services for Iowans who have a hearing loss. These services are critical components to accessing health care and implementing preventative strategies by Iowans who experience a hearing loss. In addition, the division will:

- Collaborate with public and private agencies to conduct a health care survey deaf and hard of hearing Iowans
- Collaborate with public and private agencies to collect data on the number of deaf and hard of hearing Iowans who have access to health insurance
- Incorporate healthy lifestyle choices education into existing youth leadership training and youth outreach programs increasing the number of deaf and hard of hearing youth who become peer role models

OFFER JUSTIFICATION

The historical isolation of people who are deaf or hard of hearing has impeded their full inclusion in our society. Approximately 65 percent of people who are deaf or hard of hearing live in poverty. Effective access to services and civic involvement is virtually impossible without the means to communicate. The result is that people who are deaf or hard of hearing live in a world of frequent misunderstanding and miscommunication. The lack of accurate communication puts them at serious risk of harm in many situations. Deaf and hard of hearing

people are especially fearful when understanding English is critical to decision making about medical, employment rights, legal, and financial interests.

The Division of Deaf Services, Department of Human Rights, works with public and private agencies, organizations, and groups to improve access to mental health, medical, chemical dependency, employment, education, and other services. The division focuses on training individuals to self-advocate for their need for accommodation. In addition, the division provides technical assistance and training to the public and private sector to accommodate individuals with a hearing loss. This is a new approach fully implemented by the division in the last two years. Previously the division primarily focused on providing interpreting services. Today, the division's principal focal point is collaborating with organizations and agencies to become culturally competent in providing services to individuals with a hearing loss, especially those who are culturally deaf.

Examples of best practices accomplished by the Division of Deaf Services through collaboration with the public and private sector include in the last five years:

- Increased number of culturally competent professionals serving deaf and hard of hearing people in medical, mental health, employment, social services, and education; training satisfaction rate = 98%
- Establishment of a Deaf Medical Access Program through collaboration with Mercy Medical Center and its affiliates
- Establishment of Deaf Women of Iowa Against Abuse a domestic violence and sexual assault service agency for deaf and hard of hearing Iowans
- Leadership training for deaf and hard of hearing students in 9th through 12th grades; over 100 students served with more than 80% continuing on to post-secondary education

PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT AND TARGET

- Establish baseline data on the general health of deaf and hard of hearing Iowans
- Establish baseline data on the number of deaf and hard of hearing Iowans who have access to health insurance
- Percent of deaf and hard of hearing youth attending healthy lifestyle choices education that indicate training goals were met – target = 98%

PRICE AND REVENUE SOURCE

Total Price: \$442,732

Expense Description	Amount of Expense	FTEs
Administration	\$ 67,652	.78
Program/Services	\$375,810	6.0
Total	\$442,732	6.78

Revenue Description	Amount
State	\$432,732
Grants	\$ 10,000
Total	\$442,732

OFFER FOR IOWANS

IDENTIFYING INFORMATION

Offer Identifier: H_283_01F

Offer Name: Vocational Rehabilitation Services

This offer is for a (pick one):

☐ new activity

☐ improved existing activity (describe the improvements in your narratives below)

☒ status quo existing activity

Result(s) Addressed: Improve the Quality of Life and Health of Iowans with disabilities through:

- Providing Services to Entire State
- Removal of Barriers to employment and self sufficiency for the most at-risk persons
- Community Support through collaboration and partnerships
- Preservation of Personal Dignity and Preference
- Cost Effectiveness of Service

Participants in the Offer: Department of Education, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services

Person Submitting Offer: Stephen A. Wooderson, Administrator (515) 281-6731 stephen.wooderson@iowa.gov

Contact Information: Matthew Coulter, Chief Financial Officer, (515) 281-4093 matthew.coulter@iowa.gov

OFFER DESCRIPTION

To provide comprehensive vocational rehabilitation services to individuals with disabilities in overcoming the unique barriers they experience, the division offers a variety of purchased goods and services including, diagnostic and evaluation services, vocational or academic training, assistive technology, mobility / transportation, communication services or devices, job placement and retention.

DVRS counselors provide assessment, counseling, guidance, and placement services to assist individuals in assessing their vocational interests and strengths, selecting a job goal and identifying the services needed to achieve employment by working with each individual to develop and implement an Individual Plan for Employment (IPE).

The performance of administrative functions under the VR program includes planning, development, monitoring and evaluation. Other activities include information systems, budgeting, accounting, financial management, human resources, payroll, statistical and records management, inventory, quality assurance, building maintenance, and in-service training and staff development.

These services link to provide the client the opportunity to achieve their employment, independence and economic goals.

OFFER JUSTIFICATION

- a) DVRS helped 2,086 Iowans in 2003 secure competitive employment. This **increased** their yearly earnings by \$24,973,000 and will generate significant Iowa tax revenue. This strengthens the stability, security and quality of life of these Iowans.
- b) DVRS serves persons with significant (SD) or most significant disabilities (MSD). These Iowans are the most vulnerable and at risk for requiring institutional or public assistance. For 2003 DVRS served 13,353 Iowans that are SD or MSD.
- c) Investing in VR services is extremely cost effective. Each dollar invested in VR services helps consumers increase their earnings by \$15.45.
- d) Clients successfully employed after receiving VR services increase their average weekly earnings by \$230. Competitive employment outcomes such as these connect people to their community and increase their independence.
- e) For 2003, 981 people became self supporting as a result of DVRS services; self sufficiency enhances personal dignity and facilitates independence. This helped the State of Iowa save \$1,204,896 in public assistance payments.
- f) DVRS invests and collaborates in community supports throughout the entire State of Iowa with a network of 14 Area Offices and 32 Service Units. DVRS partners with nearly 125 community rehabilitation providers (CRP), numerous state agencies and counties. These partnerships help DVRS provide more comprehensive services to maximize resources.
- g) Here is a quote from a former client that describes how DVRS services remove barriers: ***“I owe so much to Vocational Rehabilitation! From a high school drop out working at minimum wage physical labor jobs, I had to change goals because of degenerative disc disease. I would never have been able to change careers and become an attorney without their support. I now have a law practice, pay payroll taxes for my employees and myself, own a law firm that pays property taxes, and pay income taxes.”***
- h) **HIGH RETURN ON INVESTMENT:** Each \$1.00 of state appropriations invested in VR services earns \$3.69 of federal VR funds.

PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT AND TARGET

The performance measure is the number of persons with disabilities that achieve successful employment in 2006. The target is to increase successful employment closures for clients from the 2003 figure of 2086 by 29 to 2,115.

PRICE AND REVENUE SOURCE

Total Price: \$26,593,363

Expense Description	Amount of Expense	FTEs
Vocational Rehabilitation Services	26,593,363	273.5
Total	26,593,363	273.5

Revenue Description	Amount
State Appropriation I67	4,340,050
Federal Matching Funds	22,139,163
Other Revenue	114,150
Total	26,593,363

DVRS Quit Doing List:

Due to inadequate state appropriation, DVRS is not able to match all available federal funds. Therefore in 2006 we estimate that Iowa DVRS will lose \$2,505,632 of federal funding. This will result in service loss to over 1,500 clients due to the lack of federal funds. Full funding of the federal allocation requires an additional \$678,144 state appropriation. State funding would supply services to another 400 clients. Altogether another 1,900 Iowans with disabilities would be served if the State fully funded the VR program. These persons will earn \$13,647,000 in their first year of employment, and will save \$658,476 in public assistance.

Because DVRS does not have sufficient matching funds we will continue to maintain waiting lists for providing services to clients. There is no waiting list for clients with most significant disabilities (MSD). The waiting list for persons determined to be significantly disabled (SD) is currently two months; this is expected to increase to 4 months. All clients that are not determined to be either SD or MSD have stayed on a waiting list since May 2002. By federal mandate all MSD and SD clients must be served before DVRS can serve others. It is unlikely that DVRS will be able to serve this population in the foreseeable future with the current anticipated budget.